(b) what are the instructions in this regard; and

(c) what steps are being taken to ensure uniformity-in this regard in all banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) to (c) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have reported that as per recommendation of the Working Group on Customer Service (Talwar Committee) constituted in 1975.all cheques, forms should be printed in Hindi and English. Customer may, however, write cheques in Hindi, English or any other language of their choice. Further, as per recommendation of the Goiporia Committee on Customer Service, banks may make available to the customers brochures/pamphlets in regional language/Hindi/English giving details of various schemes available and terms and conditions thereof. RBI have examined the above recommendations and its implementation by banks with the Indian Banks' Association (IBA). IBA have advised that they had discussed the issue with some major public sector banks and the banks have informed them that forms/ pamphlets/brochures are printed by them in trilingual form. IBA has also informed that banks are accepting cheques in regional languages.

Safety of investors money

850. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

SHRI HARISH RAWAT:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what precautions have been taken by Government for the safety of public money while granting greater operational freedom to State run banks which were involved in share scams previously; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHR! S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) and (b) Various steps have been taken to curb frauds, scams and illegal transactions in the banks *viz.* Know Your Customer (KYC) norms, introduction of Core Banking Solutions (CBS), Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS), modernisation and technological upgradation etc. Besides, banks are under multilayered oversight—Concurrent Audit, Statutory Audit by auditors from a panel recommended by

Comptroller and Auditor General and an elaborate system of off-site, on-site and Risk based supervision of RBI which is elaborate and in several ways goes deeper than the audit. Banks' audit by external auditors is thus supplemented by intensive supervision within RBI and is overseen by the Board for Financial Supervision (BFS) consisting of eminent persons who are directors of the Central Board of RBI.

Effect of VRS on banks efficiency

† 851. SHRI SURENDRA LATH:
SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to computerisation and re-establishment, implementation of VRS and imposition of undeclared ban on appointments and stopping of appointment on compassionate grounds in Public Sector Banks, there is a shortage of staff due to which services in the banks are getting affected;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that with the implementation of VRS, about one lakh employees have been removed from the Public Sector Banks all over the country; and

(c) if so, whether the Government would consider removing undeclared ban immediately and making consider appointments on compassionate grounds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) There has been marginal reduction in the staff strength in the Public Sector Banks (PSBs) from 7,57,048 (as on 31.03.2002) to 7,52,627 (as on 31.03.2004), as a result of manpower planning by them to ensure optimum utilization of manpower at various levels tq meet their requirement and business strategies. Banks have also taken steps to speed up computerization of their branches/offices towards improving customer services and reducing the workload on their staff. Consequently, banking services nave improved substantially with lesser workload on their staff.

(b) and (c) Under the Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) as against 1.27 lakh applications received by PSBs, about 1.02 lakh employees

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.